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Bangalore Mirror

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Keeping tabs

CITY PAGE 4

Monthly status review meetings to monitor progress of Bellandur and Varthur lake rejuvenation work

Stay connected

CITY PAGE 6

Rising mobile penetration, internet subscriptions put K'taka in leading spot in the South in telecom growth, internet connectivity

Police get behind mule accounts, crack down on cyber fraudster and arrest 156 as more people step forward to reveal their bank accounts are being misused for dubious ends

BREAKING THE BANK

8,788 complaints help police trace 869 such accounts

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A recent crackdown against mule bank accounts used in cyber frauds that led to the arrest of 156 criminals has also revealed the extent of the issue with a number of people approaching the police claiming that their bank accounts were misused.

"Earlier, we hardly received any such complaints, but since the special drive began, people have started coming forward. We are tracing and identifying those involved, while also creating awareness among the public not to share their bank account details, documents, or SIM cards with others. If mule accounts are curbed to a large extent, cybercrime can also be significantly reduced," said Pronab Mohanty, Additional Director General of Police.

The Karnataka Cyber Command unit has been actively cracking down on these networks. A total of 8,788 cybercrime complaints were traced during an investigation that helped police officals identify 869 mule bank accounts linked to organised cyber fraud networks across Karnataka. The complaints were registered on the National Cyber Reporting Platform (NCRP) and were analysed by the Karnataka Cyber Command as part of a focused crackdown on mule

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

> **"People can also identify if their account is being used as a 'money mule' by watching for unusual, high-value or rapid transactions that do not match their normal banking activity, which may indicate fraudulent usel**
>
> — Pronab Mohanty, Additional Director General of Police

WAGES OF WAR

Small businesses and workers struggle to stay afloat as global conflict eats into their pay and income

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The escalating conflict involving Iran, the United States and Israel is beginning to leave an unexpected mark thousands of kilometres away in Bengaluru. The city's economy is hit as rising fuel prices and supply disruptions push several sectors into financial stress. From hotel kitchens to street-side darshinis, the impact is slowly tightening the margins of small businesses and workers who already operate on thin earnings.

Hospitality businesses say the sharp increase in commercial LPG prices has become a major concern. Hotel owners claim that cooking gas costs have shot up significantly in recent weeks, forcing them to absorb the burden rather than pass it entirely to customers.

Ramesh Gowda, owner of a mid-sized restaurant in Rajajinagar, said the situation is becoming unsustainable. "We are paying far more for commercial LPG cylinders now. Earlier we could manage because customer flow was steady. But when

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

INSIDE» PG 7 War round-up

THINGS TO DO

01 Beat drop

CAGED returns to Indiranagar SOCIAL, bringing a high-energy night of electronic music with Tasha (UK), joined by Chaz and Cygni, for a night built around driving rhythms, immersive sound, and a dance floor designed to keep the energy moving. **Where: Indiranagar SOCIAL; When: March 14, 7 pm**

02 Art of slowing down

ArtFlute is presenting Choosing to Rest, an online exhibition that explores rest not as inactivity, but as presence - a moment of listening to the body, intuition, and inner rhythm in a world defined by speed and constant output. **Where: ArtFlute Online Gallery (www.artflute.com); When: March 13 to April 10**

03 Craft mode on

Atta Galatta is presenting Between the Pages, a beginner-friendly workshop where participants will learn how to crochet a handmade bookmark. All materials will be provided. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: March 14, 4 pm**

04 Music magic

SANAM, one of India's most cherished pop-rock groups, known for fusing old-world charm with a contemporary sound, will be performing live, bringing an unforgettable musical experience for listeners. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity; When: March 14, 7.30 pm**

05 Back to nature

Hosachiguru Farm Showcase, a three-day event brings the concept of farm and farmhouse living to urban audiences. Visitors can explore how managed farms can offer city residents a weekend retreat and a closer connection with nature. **Where: Hosachiguru Corporate Office, Jayanagar; When: March 20, 21, 22**

Innovative feeding device helps in rehabilitation of parakeets

Students design and develop biomimetic 3D-printed device that imitates posture and feeding behaviour of mother bird to help nurture rescued parakeet chicks

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In an example of how technology can support wildlife conservation, students from Gopalan College of Engineering and Management developed a unique 3D-printed feeding device that helped rescue and rehabilitate 46 orphaned Indian parakeet chicks at the People For Animals Wildlife Hospital in Bengaluru. Earlier this year, the parakeets, including 1 adult, 9 fledglings and 14 chicks were brought to the wildlife hospital in a fragile condition after being separated from their nests. The chicks required constant care and were being manually fed by rescuers. While the process ensured they received nutrition, wildlife experts observed that direct syringe feeding caused significant stress to the birds and affected their recovery.

The orphaned chicks were reportedly extremely delicate and required constant feeding. However, the conventional syringe-feeding method proved stressful, risking disruption of their natural behaviour and making rehabilitation and eventual release into the wild more difficult. The situation demanded both compassion and ingenuity.

After learning about the challenge, students from the Department of Aeronautical Engineering at GCEM came up with an innovative solution. They designed and developed a biomimetic "mother parakeet" feeding model, a specially crafted 3D-printed device that imitates the posture and feeding behaviour of a mother bird. Rather than using traditional wildlife rehabilitation methods, the students applied engineering principles and 3D-printing technology to create this life-like feeding system.

Feeding system developed by students feeds chicks in a manner that closely resembles how they would be fed in the wild

According to the students, they developed and 3D-printed the device in just three weeks, from January 16 to February 7. The idea came after wildlife rescuers explained the difficulty of feeding orphaned birds without disturbing their natural instincts. Wanting to help, the students designed a device that replicated a bird's beak and feeding posture while working with a syringe. The final model replicated the natural feeding posture of a mother parakeet, allowing rescuers to feed the chicks in a way that closely resembled how they would be fed in the wild.

According to the team involved in the project, the device significantly reduced stress among the chicks and improved their feeding response. By minimising excessive handling during feeding, the recovery rate increased from around 80 per cent to nearly 95 per cent. The improved process also helped speed up the chicks' recovery and boosted their chances of survival before release into the wild, while almost completely eliminating the risk of human imprinting.

Device reduced stress and improved feeding response among chicks, while also raising recovery rates, speeding rehabilitation and nearly eliminating risk of human imprinting, as per team

Reflecting on the initiative, Sunita Prabhakar, Director of Gopalan Foundation, said, "This project turns technical expertise into compassionate solutions. It shows how young engineers can use their skills beyond the classroom to make a meaningful impact in wildlife conservation."

Ten-day traffic restrictions due to ongoing railway work

Bengaluru Traffic Police have announced temporary traffic restrictions near the Kempegowda Underpass on Kasturi Nagar Outer Ring Road, which comes under the Banaswadi Traffic Police Station limits. The measures have been imposed due to ongoing concrete work and the laying of iron plates by the Railway Department. As per traffic police officials, all vehicular movement will be prohibited on the roads for 10 days starting from March 13, 2026. Alternate routes have been suggested to ensure smooth traffic flow.

For the next ten days, vehicles going towards Ramamurthynagar and Sadanandanagar towards Vijinapura FCI Godown on the Kasturi Nagar Outer Ring Road, near the underpass, will be temporarily restricted. As per the alternate routes suggested, vehicles travelling from Ramamurthynagar to Vijinapura can proceed straight on Ramamurthynagar Main Road and take a right turn onto FCI Road. Two-wheelers from Sadanandanagar to Vijinapura can take Kasturi Nagar 2nd Cross, reach Ramamurthynagar Junction and proceed to Vijinapura.

Vehicles travelling from Vijinapura to Kasturi Nagar can take Vijinapura Road 3rd A Cross. The traffic police stressed on the fact that parking will be restricted on Kasturi Nagar Outer Ring Road between Ramamurthynagar Service Road and Kasturi Nagar Service Road. The traffic police have asked the public to plan their travels as per the new restrictions and to cooperate with officials. **— BMB**

K'taka govt hints at increasing PHH ration card income limit

The Karnataka government on Thursday indicated that it may hike the family income limit to obtain a Priority Households (PHH) ration card, considering rising costs. Karnataka Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao gave this indication in the Legislative Assembly, while replying to a question on behalf of Food and Civil Supplies Minister KH Muniyappa. He was responding to a question by senior BJP MLA CN Ashwath Narayan, during question hour. "The current family annual income limit of Rs 1.20 lakh was fixed in 2017, it should certainly be accepted that the amount is less. From 2017, we are now in 2026. There is a need to revise this. It must be re-examined," said Rao, who previously served as Food and Civil Supplies Minister. Noting that the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission, headed by senior Congress MLA RV Deshpande, has recommended increasing the income limit to Rs 3 lakh, he said, "The department will look into this." Raising the issue, Narayan stressed the need for higher income limits as the cost of living in Bengaluru had risen.

Karnataka has 1.24 crore households with PHH ration cards, Rao said. "The Centre has identified 1.09 crore eligible families in Karnataka. But the state has exceeded this by 15.8 lakh families. In some rural areas, 95 per cent of the population is covered." **— PTI**

Work gains pace at Chinnaswamy Stadium

Renovation work at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium has gathered pace, with several infrastructure upgrades nearing completion. A few large entry gates have already been installed, while widening work at other entrances is currently underway. The upgrades follow recommendations made by the committee headed by Justice Cunha after the earlier stampede incident. While the committee had suggested expanding entry gates to six metres, the Karnataka State Cricket Association has widened them further to nine metres in order to ease crowd congestion and improve movement. Additional works such as separate entry gates for women and children, designated waiting areas for spectators and improved lighting facilities are also being completed as part of the stadium overhaul. **— BMB**

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Lake rescue gets watchdogs, dashboard, monsoon deadline

Monthly monitoring, public website and field inspections planned as BDA accelerates Bellandur and Varthur lake rejuvenation ahead of monsoon

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The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has decided to conduct monthly status review meetings to monitor the progress of rejuvenation works at Bellandur and Varthur lakes. In addition, comprehensive stakeholder meetings will be held once every two months to ensure wider participation and oversight.

A review meeting chaired by BDA Commissioner Major Manivannan was held on Wednesday, attended by citizen volunteers, BDA engineers and former NGT Monitoring Committee member TV Ramachandra. Participants also decided to conduct a field inspection of the lakes on April 8. During the meeting, BDA announced plans to develop a dedicated public website to publish details on Bellandur and Varthur lake rejuvenation, including project progress, financial expenditure, technical reports and monthly updates. The meeting also noted that lake custodianship may transition to the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

The BDA authority will provide the lake bed depth profile and Total Station Survey data for lake and buffer areas. Engineers informed the meeting that nine contractor bills have been processed for desilting at Varthur Lake. Citizen volunteers sought disclosure of silt quantity removed, desilting locations and disposal sites.

Officials said five access points around the lake perimeter will be maintained for monitoring, maintenance and emergency access. Measures will control macrophytes and invasive vegetation through nutrient load reduction and removal. Sonali Singh from Bellandur Lake Group said she has seen encouraging traction from BDA under Commissioner Major Manivannan.

Measures planned to control macrophytes and invasive vegetation in lakes

KAUSHIK JN

"The local BDA Executive Engineer Yeshwanth has also been very responsive. On the ground, work appears to be progressing with renewed focus, and BDA has committed to completing desilting, silt disposal, and creation of wetlands before the monsoon. If the current pace continues and no new hurdles emerge, the desilting portion of the rejuvenation could likely be completed by May 2026, which would be ahead of the monsoon. That is encouraging", said Sonali Singh.

She said that several concerns remain including murmurs about funds running out again. "In November 2025, the Government of Karnataka released Rs 97 crore, while BDA requested Rs 250 crore. Citizens believe there must be transparency in expenditure, and the public should know how funds are being utilised. The BDA Commissioner has assured that this will be addressed and that financial details will be made available on the BDA website. It is also important to remember that desilting is only one part of the larger rejuvenation process. The bigger question is who will take long-term guardianship of the lake once the civil works are completed", she said. Stating that the coming monsoon will likely be the first time Bellandur Lake fills substantially with fresh rainwater after rejuvenation, she said it will be a critical test, requiring continuous monitoring to ensure the system functions properly and issues are addressed quickly.

> **"If the current pace continues and no new hurdles emerge, the desilting portion of the rejuvenation could likely be completed by May 2026, which would be ahead of the monsoon. That is encouraging**
> – Sonali Singh (Bellandur Lake Group)

"Sewage inflow remains a concern. While sewage has been diverted from the lake, it has not been fully eliminated. Inflows continue through diversion channels, and the long-term success of the rejuvenation depends on ensuring that untreated sewage does not re-enter the lake's system. We are also concerned about lake protection going forward. The strength of Lake Marshals has been reduced from 24 to 10. If monitoring weakens at this stage, dumping of solid waste, debris accumulation, and fresh encroachments could undo much of the progress made", she said.

She said that another unresolved issue is the continued encroachment of lake land in Ambedkar Nagar.

City activists push faster airport suburban rail deadline

A group of 40 environmentalists, civic activists, mobility experts and citizens has approached the Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company (K-RIDE) seeking revision of the March 2030 deadline for the airport corridor of the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project. In a letter to Managing Director Lakshman Singh on March 12, they urged advancing the target to March 2028 and accelerating Corridor 1 work.

"We have urged K-RIDE, in the larger interests of the quality of life of millions of people living in and around Bengaluru, to urgently and comprehensively review and revise the Corridor 1 target to March 2028. We expect Intelligent solutions and actions from technocrats, instead of reasons for delays in a much-needed public transport project. With all planning and alignment permissions in place, at this stage, we firmly believe March 2028 is doable," the group said in the letter.

"Citizens have fought for suburban rail for decades. It is tragic that Bengaluru still waits. Every delay is a betrayal of commuters who suffer daily in traffic. Fast-track suburban rail, and you will restore faith in governance and give Bengaluru hope," said Rajkumar Dugar, founder of Citizens for Citizens (C4C).

Experts also pointed out that the suburban rail project and track doubling works have faced major delays, with none of the four corridors nearing completion. According to them, slow progress is increasing project costs while prolonging inconvenience to commuters.

"As per our information, the overall on-ground work done on doublings is less than 50 percent, and on BSRP, it is less than 15 percent. This pathetic progress brings disrepute to Bengaluru. For a global city, having earned itself the sobriquets of Silicon City, IT City, BT City, Science City, and Tech City, the snail-paced work by KRIDE until now is eroding trust and diminishing impact, while being extremely disturbing," the group said.

Apart from expediting work on the airport corridor, the group urged authorities to resume work on the second and fourth corridors, finalise the third corridor between Kengeri and Cantonment, and begin work on depots at Akkupete and Soldevanahalli. "Bengaluru is India's growth engine, yet our infrastructure lags. The Suburban Rail Project is not a luxury, but a necessity. Bengaluru deserves world-class mobility. Authorities must accelerate BSRP to match the city's economic stature," said Mohandas Pai.

"Bengaluru's air quality is worsening daily. Suburban Rail is the green solution we cannot afford to delay. Every stalled project is a blow to the environment. BSRP must be prioritised over road-centric vanity projects," said Dattatreya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust. **— BMB**

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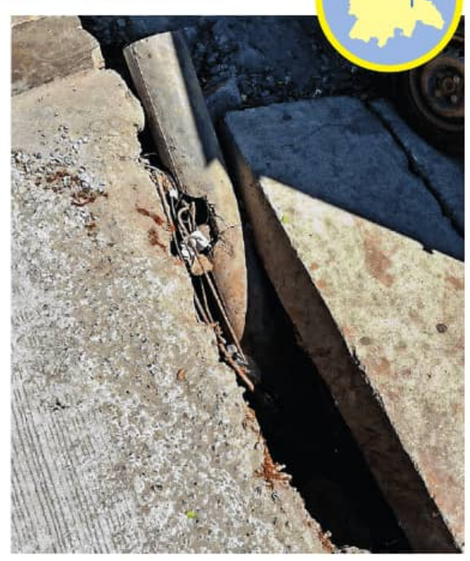
Garbage menace
Ashok Nagar

Garbage dumped on AMC Road in Ashok Nagar–Kaval Bairasandra is causing mosquito breeding, traffic obstruction and blocking the entrance to Asra Layout.

Open drain
Marathahalli



An open drain opposite Village Hypermarket in Spice Garden, Marathahalli is posing a safety risk, with residents urging GBA East or BWSSB to close it immediately.

Footpath blocked
Crescent Road

A cot placed and locked on the footpath opposite Karnataka Judicial Academy on Crescent Road near Sivananda Circle, along with a pot of spoiled milk and water, is blocking pedestrian movement.

'How do you permit a 15-year-old in your premises to drink alcohol?'

Court expresses concern while halting criminal proceedings against licensee of B'luru brewery

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IN HIGH COURT

The Karnataka High Court has temporarily halted criminal proceedings against the licensee of a Bengaluru brewery in a case linked to the death of a teenage boy who allegedly consumed alcohol before dying by suicide.

A single-judge bench of M Nagaprasanna granted interim relief after hearing arguments from both the petitioner and the State. The court ordered a stay on further proceedings until the matter is heard again.

While granting relief, the judge expressed concern about the alleged entry of minors into establishments serving alcohol. The court observed that the incident raises serious questions about compliance with regulatory norms governing pubs and breweries in the city. "A life is lost… How do you permit a 15-year-old boy to enter your premises and consume alcohol?" the court remarked during the hearing.

The bench also noted that several pubs in Bengaluru appear to disregard legal requirements and warned that such establishments must be prepared to face prosecution if violations are found.

The court further suggested that authorities tighten enforcement measures. It orally observed that the Police Commissioner should consider issuing strict instructions requiring identity verification before alcohol is served, adding that action should follow if liquor is provided without checking identification such as Aadhaar cards.

Despite these observations, the court granted interim protection to the petitioner while examining the legality of the FIR registered by the Rajarajeshwari Nagar Police Station.

Medical risk halts 28-week pregnancy termination plea

The Karnataka High Court has refused to allow the termination of a 28-week pregnancy sought by a survivor of sexual assault, observing that the safety and health of the woman must take precedence when medical experts caution against carrying out the procedure at such an advanced stage.

The survivor filed a plea before the High Court seeking permission to medically terminate the pregnancy, which had crossed the gestational limit prescribed under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) law. Since termination beyond the statutory period generally requires judicial approval and expert medical evaluation, the court directed that the woman be examined by a specialised medical board to determine whether the procedure could be safely performed.

The medical board subsequently submitted its report to the court after evaluating the woman's condition and the stage of pregnancy. According to the findings placed before the bench, terminating the pregnancy at 28 weeks posed significant health risks. The board indicated that carrying out the procedure at such a late stage could endanger her life and physical well-being.

After considering the report, the High Court declined to grant permission for termination. The court noted that it could not issue directions that run contrary to the medical opinion provided by experts, especially when the assessment indicates potential harm to the patient. The judge emphasised that judicial orders in such sensitive matters must rely on scientific and medical expertise.

The court also observed that while it remained mindful of the distress and trauma faced by the survivor, it could not disregard the medical board's findings regarding the risks involved in terminating the pregnancy. In the absence of a clear medical opinion stating that the procedure could be performed safely.

At the same time, the High Court directed the concerned government hospital and medical authorities to provide continuous care, monitoring and all necessary treatment to safeguard the woman's health until delivery. The court also instructed authorities to ensure that she receives appropriate support services, including access to medical counselling and other assistance during the remainder of the pregnancy. –BMB

No smoking day drive nets 658 cases

On the occasion of No Smoking Day, the East Division of Bengaluru City Police conducted a special enforcement drive across the division. A total of 68 teams were formed and carried out surprise checks at 801 petty shops, bakeries, condiment stores and hotels. Many of these outlets were located near schools and colleges, raising concerns about easy access to tobacco products.

During the operation, police teams registered 324 cases under the Cigarettes and.

Police said the special drive aimed to create awareness among the public about the harmful effects of tobacco consumption and the legal provisions governing its sale and use. Officials reiterated that smoking in public places is banned and warned that violations related to sale or use of tobacco products will invite action under the Act. –BMB

House help arrested for cash, gold theft

The Pulikeshi Nagar police arrested a house help on March 5 after she confessed to stealing cash and gold jewellery from her employer's residence on Stephen's Road, Frazer Town. Police said, the resident's elderly mother-in-law often took the housemaid along to the ATM, making her aware of where cash and gold jewellery were kept in the house. The accused is suspected to have stolen about Rs 14 lakh along with two gold chains weighing 54 grams from the residence since last year.

On further questioning, the accused revealed that she kept the stolen money and gold chains at her residence. The police recovered Rs 8 lakh and 54 grams of gold jewellery, amounting to a total of Rs 16 lakh from her possession. –BMB

Two-wheeler thief held, 17 bikes seized

Acting on a complaint lodged by a PG occupant in Ashwath Nagar, who approached the police on January 26 over his stolen two-wheeler, Marathahalli police seized 17 two-wheelers valued at Rs 11.80 lakh.During his time in police custody, the accused disclosed that he had traded 12 bikes to his two friends living in Bairandanahalli village, in Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu. Police recovered 17 stolen bikes worth Rs 11.80 lakh. Cases against him were detected across 7 stations, including Mahadevapura, Kadugodi, Avalahalli, Bellandur, Varthur, Bommanahalli, and HSR Layout. –BMB

Panel to keep check on lead levels in veggies, leafy greens

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In response to alarming findings that vegetables and leafy greens supplied to Bengaluru contain lead and other toxic chemical elements up to 20 times above permissible limits, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre announced that a multi-departmental committee will be constituted to address the issue. The committee will include representatives from the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Forest, and Pollution Control Board departments, and will soon prepare guidelines to prevent such contamination.

The issue was raised in the Legislative Assembly by Dr. CN Ashwath Narayan under a calling attention motion. He stated that excessive levels of lead and other metals are being detected in vegetables and leafy greens grown around Bengaluru. One

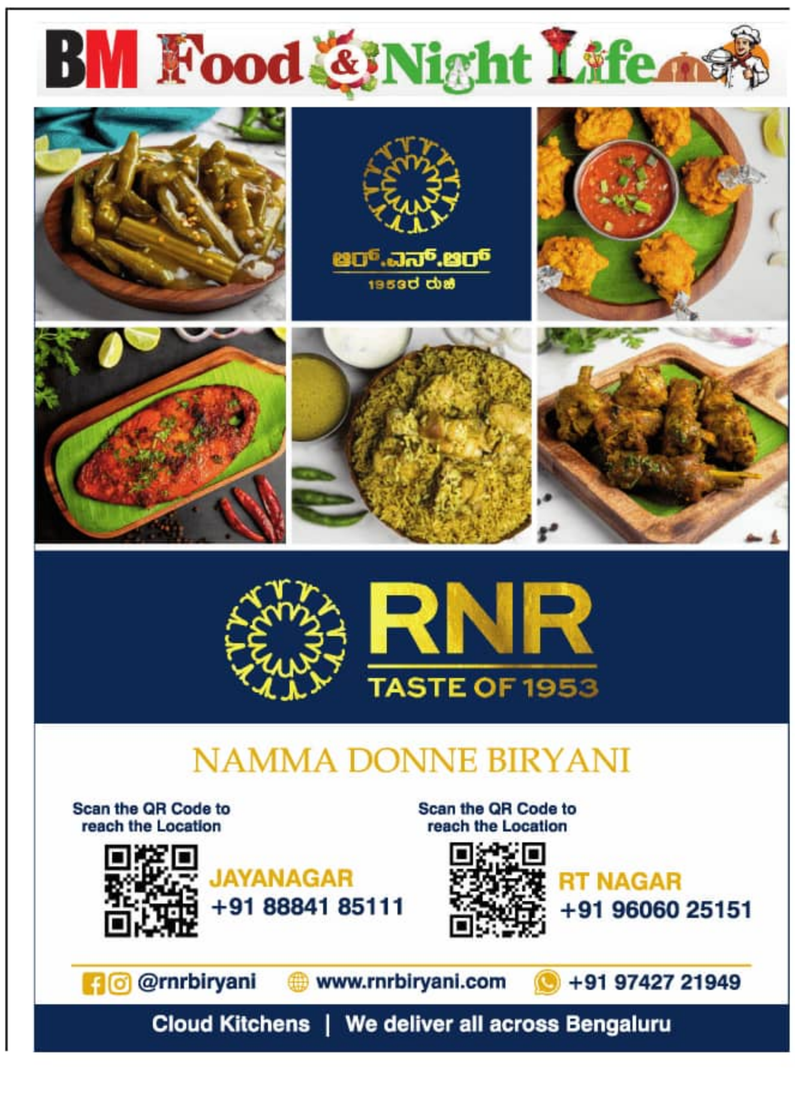
Studies revealed vegetables supplied to Bengaluru contain lead and other toxic elements

of the main reasons, he said, is that water from Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), which is not adequately purified, is being released into lakes. Farmers are then using this water to grow vegetables.

He also pointed out that adulteration has been detected in milk products and harmful substances have been found in eggs. These issues are affecting public health, with increasing reports of illnesses. According to him, one out of every two people is now showing signs of fatty liver disease, and stomach-related ailments are also on the rise. He urged the Health and Family Welfare Minister to pay serious attention to the matter.

Responding to the concern, Eshwar Khandre agreed with the observations and said the suggestion to form a committee involving multiple departments was appropriate. He announced that under the leadership of the Health Department, such a committee would be formed as early as next week.

Khandre further noted that increasing water and air pollution in and around Bengaluru is a major cause of the problem. He pointed out that there is a shortage of sewage treatment facilities to purify wastewater within a stipulated timeframe. He emphasised the need for a long-term plan to address the city's sewage and solid waste disposal challenges.



Karnataka tops southern states in telecom, internet connectivity growth

Economic Survey 2025-26 shows State records high tele density and strong internet growth, driven by private telecom operators and expanding digital infrastructure

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The state has emerged as a leading state in telecommunications and internet connectivity among southern states, according to the Karnataka Economic Survey 2025-26. The survey highlights strong growth in mobile penetration and internet subscriptions, reflecting the state's expanding digital infrastructure and increasing reliance on mobile-based communication. According to the survey, the telecommunications sector in Karnataka is operated by both public and private service providers. Alongside Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), private telecom companies such as Vodafone Idea, Reliance Jio Infocomm, Bharti Airtel, Reliance Communications and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) provide wireless and wireline services across the state. The presence of multiple service providers has contributed to the steady expansion of mobile and internet services in both urban and rural areas.

The survey noted that Karnataka recorded a total tele density of 101.69 per cent, indicating that the number of mobile and telephone connections exceeds the state's population. This places Karnataka among the leading southern states in telecom penetration. Urban tele density in the state stood at 138.60 per cent, the highest among southern states, while rural tele density was recorded at 70.69 per cent. Tele density refers to the number of telephone connections for every 100 individuals in a population, and a figure above 100 per cent suggests that many people own more than one connection.

Increasing dependence on wireless networks and declining landline connections show the shift toward mobile internet, supporting digital payments, online services and e-governance access

Internet subscribers (in millions)

State	Rural	Urban	Total
Andhra Pradesh	18.28	18.67	36.95
Karnataka	22.32	41.78	64.10
Kerala	17.99	19.80	37.79
Tamil Nadu	19.07	46.90	65.97

With over 64 million internet subscribers and the highest urban tele density among southern states, Karnataka's digital expansion highlights rising smartphone use, private sector participation and the need to strengthen village-level connectivity

A comparison with neighbouring states shows variation in connectivity levels. Andhra Pradesh reported a total tele density of 79.23 per cent, Tamil Nadu 99.03 per cent and Telangana 104.45 per cent. Kerala recorded the highest overall tele density at 115.61 per cent, although its urban tele density remained lower than that of Karnataka. The figures are based on the Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicator Report for the quarter ending September 2025, cited in the survey.

The report also highlighted a steady rise in internet usage across the southern region. Karnataka recorded 64.10 million internet subscribers, the second highest among southern states after Tamil Nadu, which reported 65.97 million subscribers including Chennai. In Karnataka, urban areas account for the majority of internet users, with 41.78 million subscribers, while rural areas have 22.32 million users.

Other southern states reported lower numbers, with Andhra Pradesh having 36.95 million internet subscribers, Kerala 37.79 million and Telangana 37.25 million. The data shows that urban regions continue to dominate internet usage, but rural connectivity is gradually improving as digital services expand into smaller towns and villages.

The survey attributes the rapid growth of mobile and internet services to increased participation by private telecom operators and continued improvements in digital infrastructure. At the same time, the number of traditional landline connections and telephone exchanges has declined over the years due to the shift towards mobile telephony and data-based communication.

Experts say the expansion of telecommunications and internet connectivity plays a key role in supporting financial inclusion, digital payments and e-governance initiatives. They note that the steady rise in tele density and internet subscribers reflects rapid digital adoption across urban and semi-urban areas, but stress that improving rural connectivity will be essential to ensure that digital services, online education, telemedicine and digital payments reach all sections of society.

Final-year MBBS student dies in road accident

A 21-year-old MBBS student was killed and her friend injured after a speeding tipper lorry rammed into their scooter on Mysore Road on Wednesday evening. Police identified the deceased as Krithikaa CSB, a final-year student of Rajarajeswari Medical College and Hospital (RRMCH). She was travelling with her friend Hansa, who was riding the scooter, while returning home from college. According to the Kengeri Traffic Police, the scooter was trying to merge onto Mysore Road when a tipper lorry coming from the opposite direction at high speed hit the two-wheeler. The impact caused the scooter to skid, throwing both onto the road. Krithikaa fell to the left side and was run over by the lorry, while Hansa fell to the right and suffered injuries. Passersby shifted them to RRMCH, where doctors declared Krithikaa dead due to severe injuries and blood loss. Police have seized the lorry and detained the driver. — BMB

ED attaches Anil Ambani's assets

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday said it has attached properties worth over ₹581 crore belonging to companies linked to Anil Ambani, including Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL) and Reliance Commercial Finance Limited (RCFL). The attachment order, issued on March 11, covers land parcels across several states such as Goa, Kerala, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, with a total value of ₹581.65 crore.

The ED said the action followed search operations conducted on March 6 in connection with a case against Reliance Power Limited under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The probe is based on a CBI FIR filed after complaints from Yes Bank, Union Bank of India and Bank of Maharashtra over loans that later turned into non-performing assets worth over ₹11,000 crore. nonperforming assets. — BMB

60 FIRs registered between December & February

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

account operations. Between December 2025 and February 2026, the Cyber Command registered 60 FIRs in connection with these cases.

During the crackdown, investigators also seized hundreds of SIM cards and mobile phones used for coordinating the illegal activities. Officials said the operation tracked cyber frauds amounting to ₹259.42 crore, while bank accounts holding over ₹62 crore suspected to be linked to fraudulent transactions were frozen. The drive, aimed at dismantling organised "mule herding" networks that recruit individuals to provide bank accounts for cyber fraud, resulted in the identification of key suspects and strengthened efforts to curb digital financial crimes in the state.

Modus operandi

According to officials, mule herders allegedly collected personal identity documents and banking details from several individuals, often paying them between ₹10,000 and ₹20,000 to gain access to their bank accounts. These mule herders reportedly acted as intermediaries, supplying such accounts to cybercriminals or renting them out for fraudulent operations. Investigators said the accounts were then used to carry out various illegal financial activities, including online scams, illegal betting transactions, and even digital arrest fraud schemes.

Officials said that many people are coming forward to report mule account activities only after realising they have been implicated in cybercrime cases.

One such case was of a 23-year-old auto driver from KG Halli, who filed a complaint alleging that his bank account was misused for cybercrime. The complainant, Sheikh Pardeen Ahmed of Vinoba Nagar, said a man identified as Nazim approached him about a month earlier while he was driving an auto rickshaw and offered to help him open a bank account. Nazim allegedly gave him ₹2,000 and took him to a Federal Bank branch in Banaswadi, where the account was opened using Ahmed's Aadhaar and PAN details. After the account was created, Nazim reportedly took the passbook, cheque book and ATM card. Ahmed later discovered the account had been used for cyber fraud.

Officials also stated that many account holders were unaware that their bank details were being used for fraudulent money transfers, leaving them exposed to serious legal and financial consequences. In one such case, a man lodged a complaint alleging that a woman known to him had misused his company's bank account to carry out cyber fraud transactions worth over ₹70 lakh.

According to the complaint, the victim had known a man named Vijay for nearly 15 years. Vijay's wife, Pratima Kumari, allegedly approached him stating that she frequently travelled abroad for trekking and adventure activities and requested the use of his company's current account as it was not actively used. She reportedly told him that occasional transactions would help keep the account active.

The complainant shared the banking ID, password, and mobile number linked to his company's bank account through WhatsApp on December 17. The debit card was later handed over to associates near Yelahanka bus stand in January. The alleged fraud came to light when Whitefield Cyber Crime Police visited the complainant's residence during an inquiry. Police said transactions worth ₹70.85 lakh were traced to the account. A case has been registered under the IT Act and further investigation is underway.

However, after the special drive began, several individuals have started coming forward to lodge complaints. In one such instance, a mule account holder himself approached the police, alleging that his bank account had been illegally taken over and misused. A 26-year-old man from Rajajinagar filed a complaint after police traced suspected cyber fraud funds to his bank account during the course of another investigation. He alleged that a woman known to him had requested access to his bank account and SIM card for certain transactions and later misused them without his knowledge.

"People can also identify if their account is being used as a 'money mule' by watching for unusual, high-value or rapid transactions that do not match their normal banking activity, which may indicate fraudulent use. While this drive focuses on registering cases and arresting those involved, it also aims to spread awareness about mule accounts," Mohanty added.

WAR UPDATES

Hotels, industries assured of stable PNG supply

There is reportedly no shortage of gas supply for Piped Natural Gas (PNG) in Bengaluru and hotels and industries connected to the PNG network will continue to receive uninterrupted supply without any disruption to their operations. "Piped Natural Gas supply in Bengaluru remains stable and fully under control. Industries, hotels and commercial establishments that are connected to the PNG network need not be concerned, as there is no disruption in supply and business operations will continue uninterrupted. Those eateries and hotels which are on commercial LPG and are concerned about supply can switch over to PNG line subject to the availability within a matter of just two months," explained an official from GAIL Gas Limited.

Speaking of alleged shortage of LPG in Bengaluru, the official assured that the government has increased domestic LPG production and hence domestic LPG users can take a sigh of relief. "We at GAIL are steadily expanding our pipeline network and ready to provide fresh pipeline gas connections across the city of Bengaluru so that more consumers can shift to PNG, which is not only efficient but also a cleaner and more sustainable energy solution. India is not entirely dependent on a single international source, as natural gas imports are sourced from multiple regions," he said.

He added that a Government of India gazette notification aims to improve management of natural gas supply, under which industrial and commercial users will receive up to 80 per cent of their average consumption over the past six months, while domestic and CNG segments will continue to receive full supply. The measure is intended to rationalise usage and ensure equitable distribution of gas during the current global supply uncertainties. He clarified that industries can still consume beyond the 80 per cent threshold, but such additional usage will be billed at a different price band. The temporary rationalisation, he said, is primarily aimed at discouraging wastage and ensuring efficient utilisation of gas across sectors while maintaining uninterrupted supply. **-BMB**

Citizen safety, energy security prioritised

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday that India has co-sponsored the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-led resolution at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) considering the welfare and well-being of the large Indian diaspora in the GCC countries.

Addressing a weekly media briefing on Thursday, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that India has issued several statements on the ongoing conflict in West Asia and underlined the need for prioritising the safety of all people.

"Yes, we have co-sponsored the GCC-led resolution at the UN Security Council. We have 135 countries who have co-sponsored this particular resolution. The resolution reflects several of our positions, as you know that we have a large diaspora in the GCC countries and their well-being and welfare is of utmost importance. The Gulf is also very important for our energy security needs," said Jaiswal.

"We have underlined the need for prioritising the safety of all civilians. We regret the precious lives lost and express our grief in that regard," he added. **-IANS**

Working to help those stuck: MEA

India continues to work extensively on extending assistance to Indian nationals in Iran and at the same time is also addressing issues pertaining to the safety of shipping and the country's energy security amid the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated on Thursday.

Highlighting the assistance being extended to Indian nationals in Iran, MEA on Thursday said that several citizens have returned home, while support continues for those planning to leave. The ministry urged Indian nationals wishing to leave Iran to adhere to the advisory recently issued by the Indian embassy in Tehran.

"We have around 9,000 Indian nationals in Iran, including students, seafarers, businesspeople, professionals and pilgrims. Following advisories issued earlier, several Indian nationals, especially students, have already returned home. We have recently shifted several Indian nationals, including students and pilgrims who are based in Tehran to other safer locations and cities in the country," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said during a weekly media briefing in New Delhi. Jaiswal urged Indian nationals who want to leave Iran via land borders to adhere to the advisory the Indian embassy in Tehran had issued on March 9.

"Our mission in Tehran is in constant touch with our community members and is offering all possible assistance to them," he noted. **-IANS**

Forest Dept told to monitor illegal fuelwood extraction

Given the ongoing disruption in the supply of domestic LPG cylinders in several parts of the country, the Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre has issued directions to forest officials to remain vigilant against a possible increase in fuel wood extraction, illegal tree felling, and other forest offences.

In his written instructions to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and heads of forest force, Khandre stated that LPG shortage has its impact on Karnataka as well, and if commercial cylinders are not available to hotels, resorts, and home stays, or there are interruptions in cooking gas supply for domestic use, there should be enhanced vigilance and monitoring to prevent illegal tree cutting.

KFD officials across all divisions have been directed to take appropriate patrol and precautionary measures. Khandre also stated that in the event of any illegal tree felling, the concerned division officer and staff will be held responsible.

The instructions were issued following a written request by a wildlife conservationist, drawing the Minister's attention to the issue.

In the letter, conservationist Giridhar Kulkarni underlined that, under the given circumstances, there is a possibility that some households, particularly in rural and forest-fringe areas, may temporarily resort to the use of firewood for cooking, which could lead to an increase in fuel wood collection from nearby forest areas.

The letter underlines that such increased human movement inside forest areas may also result in several ecological concerns, including trespassing into sensitive habitats, setting of fires for ease of fuelwood collection or clearing of dry biomass, and chances of human-wildlife conflict.

"In some cases, such entry into forests may also create opportunities for illegal hunting or other unlawful activities. There is also a possibility of intentional fires being set by miscreants, which could further worsen the situation as the present period coincides with the peak summer and forest fire season," Kulkarni noted in the letter. **-BMB**

Community kitchens in B'luru continue cooking without LPG

At a time when rising cooking gas prices and supply concerns linked to tensions in the Middle East are being widely discussed across households, a Bengaluru-based organisation has been demonstrating a sustainable alternative for over a decade. The non-profit Adhama Chethana Foundation has been operating large community kitchens without using LPG, instead relying entirely on renewable fuel made from agricultural waste to cook meals for thousands of children every day.

The foundation was started in 1998 by former Union Minister Ananth Kumar in memory of Girija Shastri. Over the years, the initiative has expanded significantly and today operates multiple kitchens in cities including Bengaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Kalaburagi, Ranebennur, Jodhpur and Udaipur. Under its midday meal programme, the organisation prepares and distributes nutritious meals to more than 1.6 lakh schoolchildren every day.

What makes the initiative unique is its completely LPG-free kitchen model. Since 2019, not a single LPG cylinder has been used in its cooking facilities. Instead, the kitchens rely on biomass briquettes made from agricultural waste materials. These include grain husks and coconut shells, among other items, which are processed and compressed into briquettes that serve as a renewable fuel source.

Speaking about the initiative, foundation President Tejaswini Ananth Kumar said the organisation uses nearly three tonnes of briquettes every day for cooking. "We prepare meals using renewable fuel instead of LPG.....Our focus has always been on providing food to children while also adopting environmentally responsible methods," she said.

Another major example of sustainable cooking can be seen at the Akshaya Patra Foundation operated by ISKCON. For more than 25 years, its kitchens have used steam-based cooking powered by biomass briquettes to prepare food for lakhs of beneficiaries. According to Naveen Neerada Das, Executive Director of ISKCON Bengaluru and the foundation, the organisation runs six kitchens in the city. "Most of the cooking uses steam generated through biomass fuel, reducing the need for LPG," he said. **-BMB**

Nandhini Deluxe: The Taste of Authentic Andhra in Bengaluru

For food lovers in Bengaluru, Nandhini Deluxe is synonymous with authentic Andhra cuisine. Known for its rich flavours, generous portions and consistent quality, the restaurant has built a loyal customer base over the last three and a half decades.

The journey began in 1989 when entrepreneur N Ananda from Andhra Pradesh opened the first Nandhini Deluxe near Minerva Circle. What started as a single outlet driven by passion for good food has grown into a 24-branch network across the city. Signature dishes such as Andhra-style biryani continue to attract families, food enthusiasts and late-night diners. Today, the brand is led by Dhanush S, grandson of the founder and Managing Director of Nandhini Hospitality Private Limited.

Raju, Jayaprakash V.G. and Lokesh E.G. received the VK-BM 'Food and Nightlife' Award on behalf of Dhanush S, MD of Nandhini Deluxe

For 37 years we have focused on hospitality, hygiene and authentic taste. Families continue to visit for vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Nandhini Deluxe combines tradition, flavour and innovation, remaining a destination where authentic Andhra cuisine meets warm hospitality."

-Dhanush S, Managing Director, Nandhini Hospitality Private Limited.

Fresh Look

Several outlets are being renovated with a modern-traditional design inspired by Kempegowda International Airport Terminal 2, offering a contemporary yet warm ambience. Five restaurants have already been upgraded.

Growing Brand

Nandhini Deluxe is expanding with three new outlets in Nagarbhavi, Kalyan Nagar and Mysuru, taking the total to 24, while maintaining the same authentic Andhra flavours that Bengaluru diners love. Plans are underway to grow to Chennai, Pune, Mumbai, New Delhi and internationally to cities with large Kannada communities, including Dubai, Singapore and Malaysia. A centralised kitchen ensures consistent taste, quality and hygiene across all branches. Restaurants are open 11:00 am to midnight, with online delivery until 2 am, catering to Bengaluru's late-night dining crowd.

Spice Line

Nandhini Deluxe has introduced ready-to-use spice mixes, including biryani masalas, Andhra-style pappu masala and chilli chicken spice mix, allowing customers to recreate signature flavours at home. The masalas have a three-month shelf life for convenience.

Cash crunch makes survival a tough task

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

costs increase suddenly, it becomes a financial burden. We have not reduced salaries of our staff, but if this situation continues, it will start feeling like the covid period when we had to pay expenses from our own pockets," he said. Several restaurant associations in the city have also warned that if the conflict continues, menu prices may have to be revised.

Small eateries and darshini outlets that depend on daily cooking supplies are also struggling. For many vendors, even a minor rise in fuel prices cuts deeply into profits. Mahesh, who runs a popular dosa stall, said daily expenses are rising faster than income. "We cannot increase the price of dosa every week. Customers will stop coming. But oil, gas and transport costs are increasing because of the war situation," he said.

Delivery workers and auto drivers face strain

Fuel price fluctuations have also hit delivery agents and auto drivers, many of whom depend on daily earnings. Prakash, a delivery agent working with multiple food apps in Bengaluru, said the situation is worrying. "Our income depends on how many deliveries we complete. The more we work, the more we earn. But now some hotels are reducing operations or closing early because their costs are high. Because of that we are getting fewer orders, and it directly reduces our monthly income," he said.

Meanwhile, auto-rickshaw drivers say rising auto LPG prices are directly eating into their daily earnings. Drivers point out that the price of auto LPG in Bengaluru is now close to ₹79.95 per litre and has increased by around ₹10 over the past two years, making it difficult to sustain operations. Rafiq, an auto driver operating near Majestic, said the rising cost of fuel combined with supply issues is affecting his ability to work. "Earlier we could manage because LPG was cheaper. Now the price has increased by almost ₹10 per litre in the last two years. On top of that, sometimes gas is not easily available at pumps and we have to wait for a long time. If I cannot get LPG, I cannot take my auto out on the road. That means no trips and no income for the day," he said.

He added that the drop in earnings is slowly pushing drivers into financial distress.

"My income has reduced a lot in the last few months. House rent, school fees and daily expenses are all increasing. Some days I earn just enough to buy fuel and food for the family," he said.

Matter of survival

Many workers across affected sectors say the financial pressure is becoming unbearable as incomes shrink. Suresh, who works at a small manufacturing unit in Peenya Industrial Area, said the slowdown in work has already started affecting wages. "When factory costs increase, overtime work is reduced first. Earlier we could earn extra and manage rent and family expenses. Now with less work and rising prices, it is becoming very difficult to pay house rent and meet daily needs," he said. Similarly, Lakshmi, a kitchen worker at a paying guest accommodation in BTM Layout, said the rising cost of essentials is hurting low-income workers the most. "Our salary has not increased but everything else has become expensive. Sometimes after paying rent and buying groceries, very little money remains. If this situation continues, many workers will struggle to survive in the city," she said.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAMMED FARAZ AHEMED S/o. Mohammed Arif, Residing at H No.2-207 Plot No 44, New Hidayat Centre, Gulbarga, Kalaburagi City -585101, Karnataka. today camp at Bangalore Have changed my name to MOHAMMED FARAZ AHMED vide affidavit dated: 12/3/2026 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore.

I, J. NAYAZ, Residing at No 202, Siri Signature Apartment, 2nd Floor, Behind Virat Towers Apartments, Gowdanapalya, Kumaraswamy Layout 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560061, Have changed my name to J. NAYAZ AHMED vide affidavit dated 12/03/2026 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, Shital Satish Bhagwat, residing at B-502, Vajram Esteva, Bellandur, Bengaluru - 560103 , have changed my minor child's Name from Vivan Hawal to Vivan Bhagwat for all purposes.

MY Son Kunsh mirajkar Born on 15/11/2011 Residing at No.678/21, 61st cross 5th Block Rajajinagar, Bangalore 560010, Shall henceforth be known as Kunsh P Mirajkar (Father Praveen kumar M K)

I, MANOHAR SHANTARAM SHETTY Residing at No 201, D Block Saiven Silver Oaks, Volagerekallahalli Village,Sarjapura Post, Anekal Taluk Bengaluru-562125.Have changed my name to MANOHAR SHETTY vide affidavit dated: 11/03/2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA Bangalore.

I, Amaljith Ajith S/0 Ajith Kumar G R/0 Divya JSR Limelite, Flat No. 112 B Block, Abbigere Main Road, Kammagondanahalli, Jalahalli West, Bengaluru, Karnataka, PIN Code: 560015, have changed my name from Amaljith Ajit Kumar Pillai to Amaljith Ajith for all future purposes.

I, Subhash Chandra R D S/o Ramana Gowda Dob 01-08-1956 Residing at #20 1st main Rms Colony Bhattarahalli Bangalore 560049 Shall henceforth be known as Subhash Chandra R D also

I, Touseef Pasha Ajaz Pasha R/no 25 7 Th Cross Chikkabasthi Ramasandra Sulikere Bangalore 560060 Have Changed My Name to Touseef Pasha for All Purposes.

I, Nischita W/o Anil R/o No 92/b, 15th Main Opp Balaji Medicals, JP Nagar 5th Phase, Bengaluru- 560078 have changed my name to Nischita S for all purposes

I, Naresh Kumar Chordia S/O Mahavir Prasad Chordia r/o #174, 5 Main, 4 Block, Jayanagar Bangalore have changed my name to Naresh Chordia

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DELHI-AGRA-MATHURA-JAIPUR-9 DAY:
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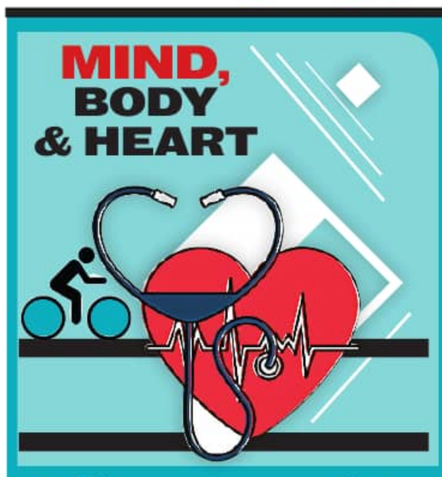
MAR: 23 APRIL: 6, 13, 20, 27 MAY : 4, 11, 18, 25

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

Vaginal boils

Vaginal boils occur when hair follicles or oil glands in the skin become infected, causing painful swelling, redness, and irritation in the genital area. Though usually not serious, recurrent boils can cause discomfort and disturb daily activities. Some gentle home remedies may help relieve symptoms and support healing.

Warm compress
A warm compress is one of the safest ways to reduce pain and swelling. Heat improves blood circulation, helping the body fight infection naturally. Soak a clean cloth in warm (not hot) water, wring it out, and place it gently over the boil for 10–15 minutes. Repeat three to four times a day. Regular use can reduce redness, promote drainage, and speed healing.

Turmeric paste
Turmeric has natural anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. Mix one teaspoon of turmeric powder with a little water or coconut oil to make a paste. Apply it gently over the boil (externally only) and leave it for about 20 minutes before rinsing with lukewarm water. This may help reduce swelling and irritation.

Tea tree oil
Tea tree oil has antimicrobial properties but should always be diluted. Mix two drops with a teaspoon of coconut or olive oil, apply with a cotton swab, leave for 15–20 minutes, then rinse. Use once daily to avoid irritation.

Neem
Neem leaves or diluted neem oil may help fight bacteria. Apply paste externally for 20 minutes, then rinse gently.

—Femina

DON'T GO ON A CATWALK

Research shows roaming cats face accidents, disease, shorter lives, and threaten native wildlife

We all know cats represent a major threat to native animals and birds. Australia's 5.3 million domestic cats kill an estimated 546 million animals each year. What is less known is that allowing a domestic cat to roam outside exposes the cat to significant danger and increases the risk of a shorter life.

About two-thirds of Australian cat owners have had a cat die while roaming outdoors. The most common risks include road traffic accidents, fighting, and falls. Our research review found that keeping cats at home is not only better for wildlife, but also safer for the cats themselves.

Losing a cat is heartbreaking, but the risks go beyond death. Many owners face large veterinary bills after their cats suffer injuries or develop lifelong health problems while roaming. This situation is not unique to Australia. Free-roaming cats worldwide face similar dangers.

> **Roaming cats face constant hazards, fights, disease, and poisoning cutting lifespans short. Containment protects pets and wildlife, ensuring safety, and fewer losses**

What are the risks?

Cameras mounted on collars give a cat's-eye view of the hazards roaming cats encounter. In one study of 55 free-roaming cats in the United States, 25% risked poisoning by eating or drinking unknown substances while away from home. Nearly half (45%) crossed roads, 25% encountered other cats, 20% crawled under houses, and 20% explored storm drains.

In New Zealand, cameras fitted to 37 cats showed that 59% drank away from home, 40% ate outside, 32% crossed roads, and 21% climbed onto roofs, risking falls.

Australian cats behave similarly. In one study, 428 radio-tracked cats crossed roads an average of 4.8 times per day, increasing the chance of injury or death.

What are the outcomes?

If you are familiar with The Simpsons, you may recall the fate of the family's cats: Snowball I and Snowball II died on the road, Snowball III drowned, Coltrane (Snowball IV) fell to his death, and only Snowball V survived. While fictional, the reality for many roaming cats is similar.

Our review found that trauma especially road accidents, fighting, and falls kills or injures many free-roaming cats worldwide. In a UK study, road traffic accidents were the leading cause of death in cats from less than one year old to eight years old.

European estimates suggest 18–24% of cats are struck by a car in their lifetime, with about 70% of incidents fatal. Victims are often under five years old and more commonly male. Risks are higher for cats that are not desexed, as they roam farther and more often.

Fame offers no protection. Former New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's cat, Paddles — known as the country's "first cat" — died after being hit by a car in 2017.

The dangers extend beyond traffic accidents. Roaming cats face infectious diseases such as Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and often fight with other cats, leading to abscesses, infections, and costly treatment.

There is also evidence of deliberate harm. Around the world, roaming cats are sometimes poisoned or injured by people. In one study tracking 55 cats in Western Australia over eight months, two were poisoned, one lost a front leg in a traffic accident, one fractured tooth in a fall, and two needed treatments after fights.

Overall, outdoor pet cats live at least two to three years less than contained cats. Even survivors of accidents or disease may suffer permanent disabilities.

How can the risks be reduced?

The simplest way to protect cats is to keep them contained on your property. This does not mean they must stay indoors all the time. Backyards can be modified with fence-top rollers, or owners can build enclosed outdoor spaces called "catios," allowing cats to enjoy fresh air safely.

Some cats can be trained to walk on a harness and leash, making supervised outdoor time possible. A report from Norway found controlled outdoor access can help maintain cat wellbeing.

Indoor cats need stimulation. Toys, scratching posts, climbing spaces, window views, and hiding places help keep them active and comfortable.

Cats that cannot go outside need indoor litter trays. Experts recommend two trays for one cat, and one extra for each additional cat. Trays should be clean, in quiet places, and never near food bowls.

Responsible cat ownership

Australians love their cats. In 2019, about one quarter of households owned a cat. By 2025, that number rose to one third. During the same period, households keeping cats indoors increased from 36% to 48%.

Perhaps people are beginning to value their cats as they do their dogs. As Australian songwriter Eric Bogle warned:

Oh, you who love your pussy be sure to keep him in. Don't let him argue with a truck, the truck is bound to win. And upon the busy road don't let him play or frolic. If you do, I'm warning you it could be CAT-astrophic.

—By Mike Calver, Heather M Crawford and Trish Fleming, Murdoch University The Conversation

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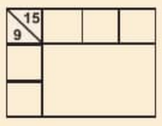
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

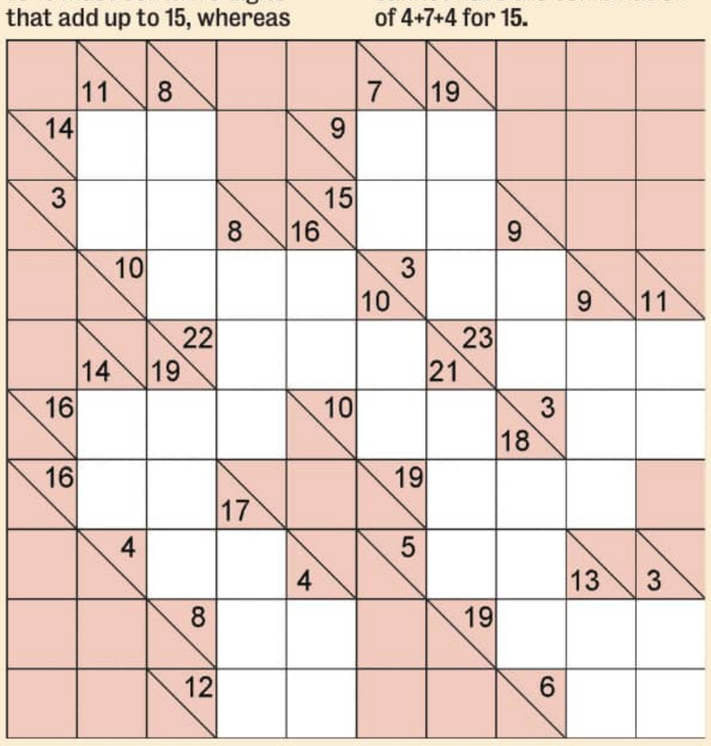
((1 / 81)^-a) x (1/9) = 729
-a=?

Kakuro

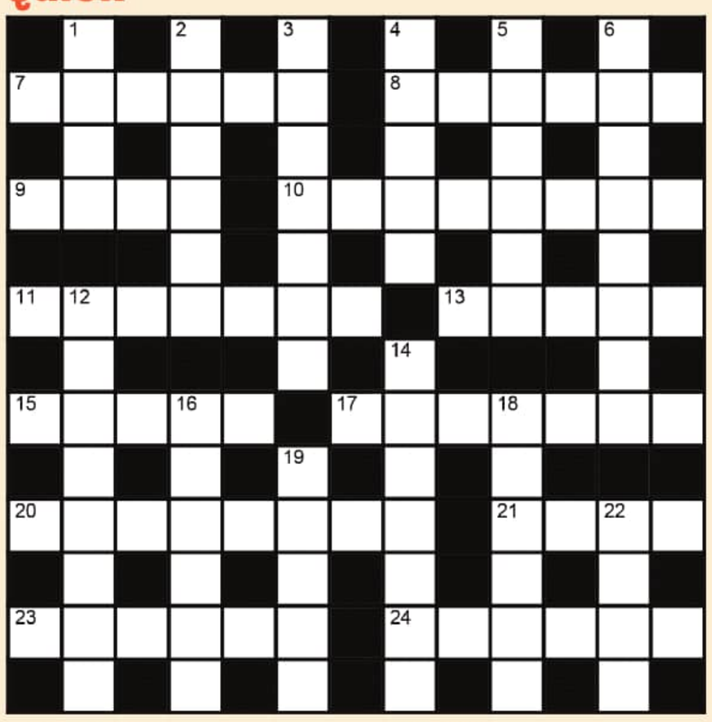
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Awaken; reach (4,2)
8 Infant's bed (6)
9 In brief, sergeants and corporals (4)
10 Brass instruments (8)
11 A ten-sided geometric figure (7)
13 Felony (5)
15 Tie the knot (5)
17 Male parents (7)
20 The Danube flows into it? (5,3)
21 One of Bangalore's oldest temples (4)
23 African republic (6)
24 Spanish friends (6)

DOWN

1 Pear variety (4)
2 Japanese hostess (6)
3 Ballroom dance (7)
4 Ransack, rifle or search (5)
5 Obstruct (6)
6 Veteran (3-5)
12 Authorizing (8)
14 Spanish-like language (7)
16 Man of the cloth (6)
18 Frodo or Bilbo in Lord of The Rings (6)
19 Narnia lion (5)
22 Plunder (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: I EQUALS C

QT SEACA QO KWXSEQWB QW SEA GWQLA.COA SEKS IKW'S OSKWN NQOIGOOQDW, JAS QS ICKIP.

Linemaro

I want to spend all my 525,600 minutes with you

Mindchow

Brighten up the world with the inner lights this time

Joke of the day

An Iranian moderate is one that has run out of ammunition

Loop

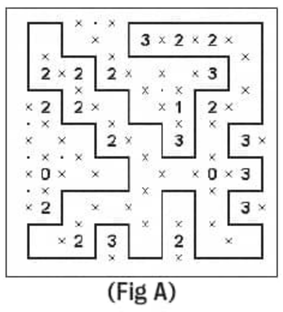
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

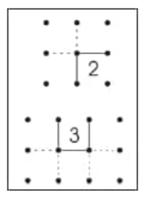
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

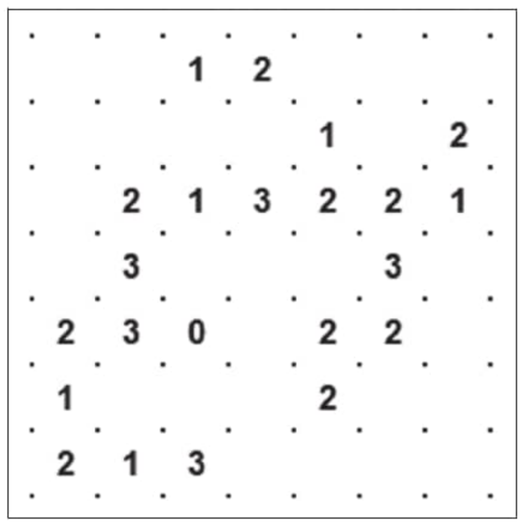
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



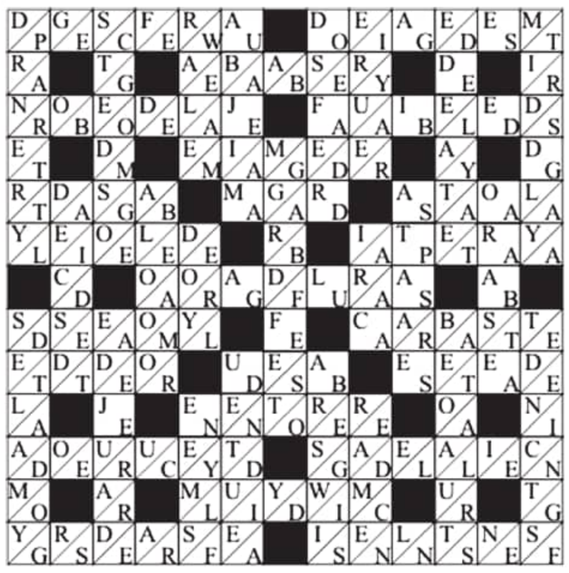
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



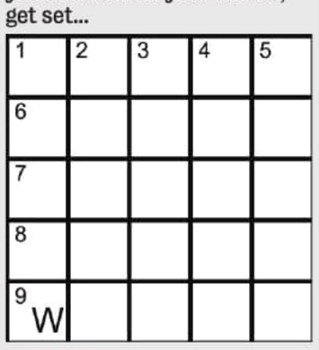
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 L sort; **6** Tee ax;
7 Paste; **8** As hay;
9 H Lew's

DOWN

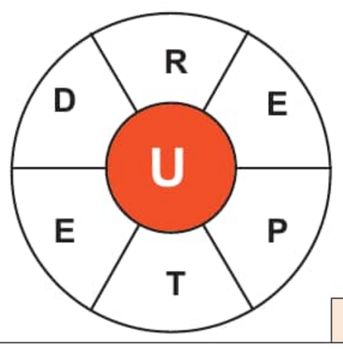
1 Wears; **2** Oye Ex;
3 Petal; **4** Halts;
5 SS Hat

Mensapuzzle

Which number completes this puzzle?

2	8
4	9
3	7
6	9
6	8
3	

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **12** Good; **14** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	6			8				
8	2		7	9			1	
9					4	2		
1					7	8		
			3		2			
		7	1					6
		2	4					7
	5			2	1		8	4
				7			5	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy

[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] = 21

4 7 5 5

Medium

[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] = 4

4 5 6 2

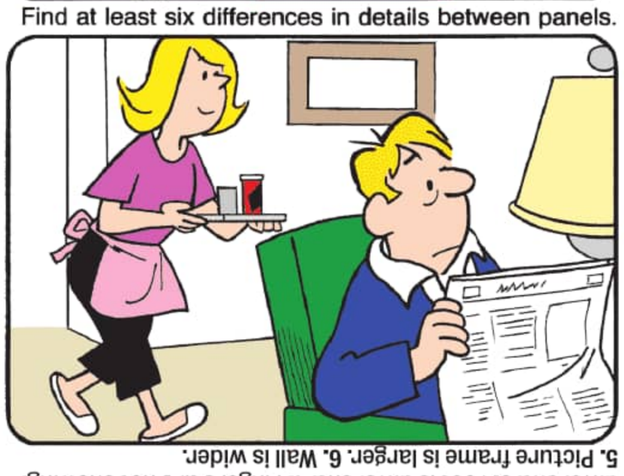
Hard

[ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ] = 18

1 2 4 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



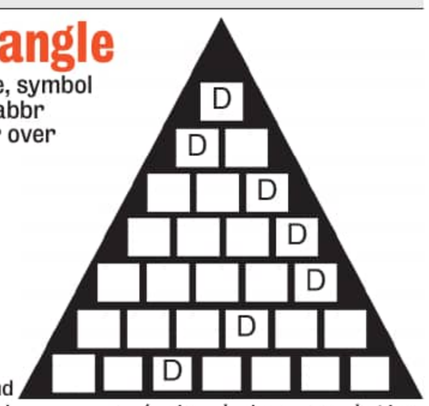
Differences: 1. Man's hair is different. 2. Arm of chair is different. 3. Foot is different. 4. Fingers are not showing. 5. Picture frame is larger. 6. Wall is wider.

Riddler

You have a lighter and two fuses that take exactly one hour to burn, but they don't burn at a steady rate. For example, one fuse could take 59 minutes to burn the first inch and then burn the rest of the fuse in the last minute. How would you use these two fuses to measure 45 minutes?

Alpha triangle

1 Hydrogen isotope, symbol
2 Delhi University abbr
3 Chew the ponder over
4 Milk byproduct
5 Healed
6 Less refined
7 Pipe fitting joint

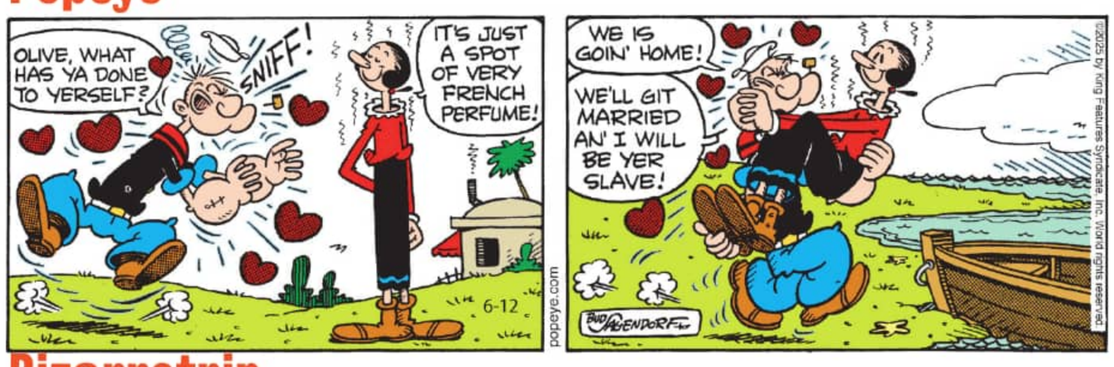


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


OLIVE, WHAT HAS YA DONE TO YERSELF?
SNIFF!
IT'S JUST A SPOT OF VERY FRENCH PERFUME!
6-12
popeye.com
WE IS GOIN' HOME!
WE'LL GIT MARRIED AN' I WILL BE YER SLAVE!
BUD SAGENDORF
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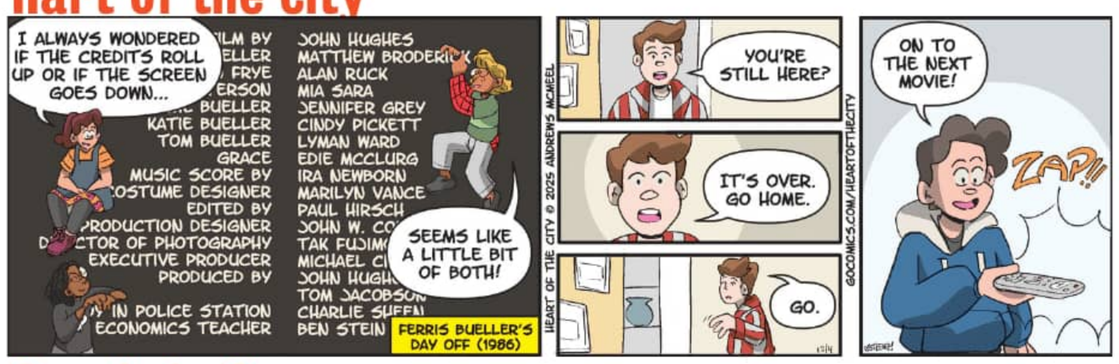
Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city



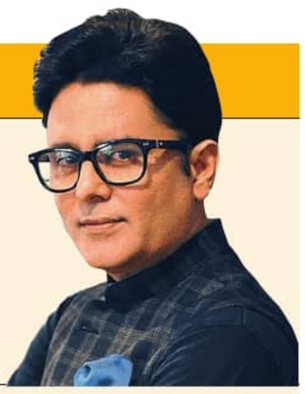
Crankshaft

OUR MONTONI'S BOWLING TEAM IS IN THE FINAL ROUND OF THE MARGO LANES HOLIDAY TOURNAMENT...
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
AND I CAN'T BOWL BECAUSE THIS IS OUR BUSIEST TIME OF THE YEAR!
BEATS ME... WE NEED A MIRACLE!
I CAN BOWL...
I MEAN A REALLY GOOD MIRACLE... NO OFFENSE!
NONE TAKEN.
PIZZA
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

Resilience defines your spirit today. Love grows stronger through honest communication. Career challenges transform into stepping stones. Financial discipline brings reassuring results. Travel encourages independence and confidence. At home, routines feel empowering rather than restrictive. You realize that perseverance paired with self-belief creates lasting success across both personal and professional worlds.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Don't take the next two days too seriously. Chaos seems everywhere because people panic. If you stay focused, know your aims, and ignore noise, you'll navigate confusion just fine calmly.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

You might think handling a tough task alone is fine, but today overwhelm is possible. Support exists, willing helpers surround you, yet you must ask clearly before pressure mounts unnecessarily.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Emotions run high for you now, with domestic matters testing patience. Remind yourself everything settles eventually, and show loved ones you remain steady, capable, and firmly in control through change.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Keep world events in perspective. Today may shock you repeatedly, yet logical distance reveals nothing truly alarming. Step back, breathe, analyse calmly, and avoid emotional overreactions entirely with confidence.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Money matters dominate today, yet there's no sign of deception. Still, caution helps; stay aware, protect resources, and keep a metaphorical hand on your wallet throughout the day for safety.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Confidence may wobble over coming days, so reaffirm your direction. Progress continues despite delays; persistence matters, and eventual success remains assured if you keep faith in your skills and vision.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Stop scanning for threats and focus forward. Imagined enemies aren't real, only mental projections. Clear your thoughts, trust reality, and release unnecessary fear completely today with logic calm confidence alone.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

You don't truly care about others' reactions, so stop guessing. Direct energy toward your primary goal, cut distractions, and let results speak louder than opinions without hesitation today or regret.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Career matters exaggerate setbacks now, making issues seem worse. Stay calm, proceed normally, and remember you're resilient; no obstacle has power to harm you in any lasting way at all.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Accept that some people choose pessimism. You can't change them, so create distance, protect your mindset, and prevent their negativity influencing your progress or energy levels today and moving forward.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Waiting for perfect conditions would stall momentum. Press ahead now, intensify effort, and trust your ability to overcome every challenge through determination and persistence without delay or doubt today whatsoever.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Relationships may feel delicate soon, so practice restraint. No matter what's said, respond gently, smile, stay composed, and refuse to escalate tension unnecessarily during the coming days with grace always.

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Yuktha, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

BULL'S EYE duet, dupe, erupt, ERUPTED, etude, prude, pure, puree, pureed, repute, true, REPUTED, rude, rupee, rupee

RIDDLER Light the first fuse on both ends and the second fuse at only one end. When the first fuse burns out you know 30 minutes have passed. Light the other end of the second fuse and when it burns out, 45 minutes have passed.

SOLVE IN 1M

81^a = 729 x 9
(3^4)^a = 3^6 x 3^2
3^4a = 3^8
4a = 8
a = 8/4 = 2

FAST FIVE

R	O	T	L	S
E	X	E	A	T
S	E	P	T	A
A	Y	A	H	S
W	E	L	S	H

STRIKE OUT

P	E	S	E	W	A		D	I	A	D	E	M
A		T		A	B	B	E	Y		E		I
N	O	O	D	L	E		F	A	B	L	E	D
T		D		E	A	G	E	R		A		D
R	A	G	A		M	A	R		S	T	O	A
Y	I	E	L	D		B		A	P	E	R	Y
A	R	A		F	U	R	A			A		
S	E	A	M	Y		E		C	R	A	T	E
D		A	R		J		E	N	T	E	R	
E	D	D	O		U	S	A		S	E	E	D
A		J		E	N	T	E	R		O		I
D	E	U	C	E	D		G	A	E	L	I	C
O		R		L	U	D	I	C		U		T
G	R	E	A	S	E		S	E	N	S	E	S

QUICK

		G		R		N		T		
A	N	G	O	L		A	M	I	G	O	S
B	L	A	C	K	S	E	A		B	U	L	L
		B		E		T		O				
M	A	R	R	Y		F	A	T	H	E	R	S
		N				C		T		E		
D	E	C	A	G	O	N		C	R	I	M	E
		H		R		R		E		I		
N	C	O	S		T	R	U	M	P	E	T	S
		S		I		X		O		C	R	A	D	L	E
C	O	M	E	T	O		C	R	A	D	L	E
B		G		F		S		H		O		

MENSA PUZZLE

4. Starting at the top, the right hand number equals the left hand number plus 6, in the next line add 5, then 4, 3, 2 and 1.

QUOTE UNCODE

If there is anything in the universe that can't stand discussion, let it crack.

SUDOKU

4	6	1	2	8	3	5	7	9
8	2	5	7	9	6	4	1	3
9	7	3	5	1	4	2	6	8
1	3	6	9	4	7	8	2	5
5	9	8	3	6	2	7	4	1
2	4	7	1	5	8	9	3	6
6	8	2	4	3	5	1	9	7
7	5	9	6	2	1	3	8	4
3	1	4	8	7	9	6	5	2

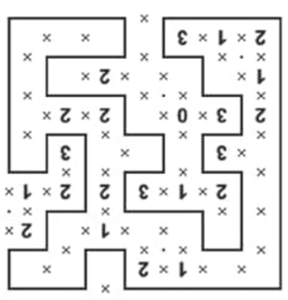
ALPHA TRIANGLE

D, DU, Dud, Curd, Cured, Cruder, Reducer.

GO FIGURE

Easy
4 + 5 + 7 + 5 = 21
Medium
5 - 6 + 2 x 4 = 4
Hard
4 / 2 x 9 x 1 = 18

LOOP



KAKURO

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 # Bachchan's emotional tribute
Amitabh Bachchan mourns loss of dear friend, shares emotional note saying sadly one by one friends leave

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Spy drama unfolds

Hemanth M Rao's 666: Operation Dream Theatre has unveiled another intriguing character from the film's expanding universe. Acclaimed actor Aditi Balan, who recently won the Tamil Nadu State Film Award, will play Agent Kaveri in the movie. Aditi Balan rose to national prominence with her debut performance in the critically acclaimed film Aruvi. film Operation Diamond Racket.

Actor Dhananjaya was introduced as Agent Shankar, further building anticipation around the covert world of operatives. With the reveal of Agent Kaveri, Aditi Balan's simple saree look, coupled with a gun in hand, has sparked curiosity among fans eager to learn more about the mission and the characters driving it.

Directed by Hemanth M Rao and produced by Dr Vaishak J Gowda under the Vaishak J Films banner, the film is mounted on a big budget and is planned for simultaneous release in Telugu and Kannada.

'Boss' first look

The first look of Kannada movie Boss was unveiled at Hyde Park Hotel on Monday. The team expressed excitement over the positive response from moviegoers. The crime thriller is supported by Anil P under the Siri Productions banner. Its shoot wrapped up four months ago, and post-production work is ongoing. The film is directed by Lava V, with Tanush Shivanna, known for Madamakki, Nanjundi Kalyana, and Natwarlal, in the lead.

I am very happy with the positive response for the first look of this movie. I am very happy with the hardwork and commitment of the cast and crew during the shooting," said director Lava V.

Tanush Shivanna thanked the media and audiences for supporting his previous movies. "I played the youth who works for the welfare of society. I want to thank all those responsible for the completion of the movie's shooting," he said.

The movie also features Dr Vijayesh, Veeren Keshav, Bheeshma Ramaiah, and Lakshman Poojari.

Saif reveals Taimur's curiosity

In a heartwarming chat on his sister Soha Ali Khan's podcast, Saif Ali Khan offered fans a glimpse into his life as a father, revealing a persistent question from his eight-year-old son, Taimur Ali Khan. Referred to as "Tim" by his family, Taimur recently asked, "How long are you planning to do this for?"

Saif shared, "Which is something Tim also asked me recently," I said I don't know, as long as I can! Forever, it is my job! But they are like 'No!'"

They start work at 7 am. The camera rolls at 9 am and they get a lot of work done in a day as well as see their children in the evening before they sleep.

Saif further compared work-life balance to mountain climbing, saying, "To scale a mountain, one must have a strong base camp, but if someone keeps climbing endlessly, that base camp ceases to exist. Therefore, maintaining the base camp is important to preserve one's ability to continue the climb."

Recently, he starred in Netflix's 'Jewel Thief: The Heist Begins' and will next feature in Priyadarshan's "Haiwaan" with Akshay Kumar.

—ETimes

DEEPIKA GROUNDS PARIS PLAN

Flight disruptions amid Iran-Israel tensions force Deepika Padukone to cancel Paris appearance

Actor Deepika Padukone has reportedly cancelled her planned trip to Paris following flight disruptions linked to escalating tensions related to the Iran-Israel conflict. The Bollywood star, who serves as a global ambassador for a luxury brand, was scheduled to attend an event in the French capital but had to withdraw after her flight was cancelled at the last minute.

A source close to the actor said travel arrangements had already been finalised before the disruption occurred. "Deepika was initially confirmed to attend. She had zeroed in on her outfits and begun fittings for the appearance. But her flight was among the many that were cancelled in the last few days. Also, given that the war has been escalating and affecting several countries across West Asia, she reconsidered whether it was the right time to be travelling," the source told Mid-day.

As of now, her team has not released an official statement regarding the cancellation of her Paris appearance.

On the film front, Deepika will soon reunite with Shah Rukh Khan in the upcoming film "King". The project will also feature SRK's daughter Suhana Khan in a leading role. Reports suggest that Shah Rukh and Suhana recently filmed a major sequence set during Vijayadashami celebrations in Mumbai. For the scene, the makers reportedly built a massive set designed to recreate the scale and energy of a festive procession.

The sequence was reportedly shot across eight nights, with Suhana performing multiple action stunts, hinting at a high-octane role in the film. Apart from King, Deepika is also part of filmmaker Atlee's upcoming project "AA22XA6" alongside Allu Arjun. According to a report by Variety India, the makers may reveal the film's official title on Allu Arjun's birthday, April 8, 2026, though no formal confirmation has been made.

—ETimes

Akshya honours film legend

Bollywood hunk Akshay Kumar called late filmmaker Yash Chopra one of Indian cinema's finest directors during the latest episode of the reality game show Wheel of Fortune.

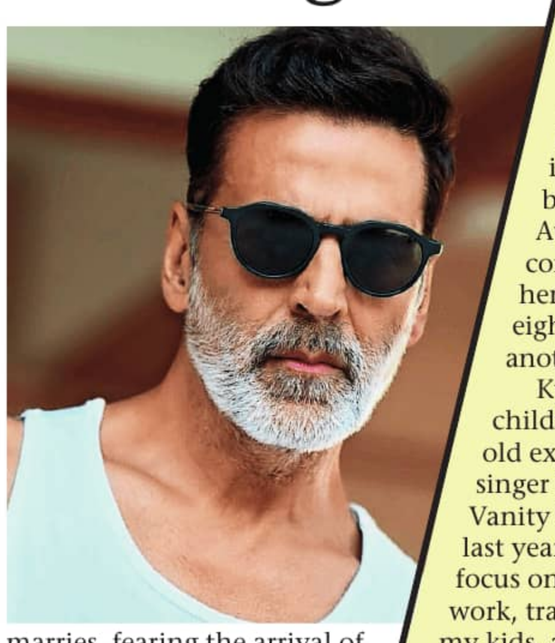
An emotional moment occurred during one of the puzzle rounds when Gaurav Gera came close to solving the puzzle but couldn't crack it. Seeing this, Akshay invited the audience to try their luck. One audience member quickly guessed the correct answer, "Yash Chopra."

The answer made Akshay recall the legendary filmmaker. With admiration, he said, "Yash Chopra hamare Indian film industry ke behtareen directors mein se ek the. (Yash Chopra was one of the best directors of our Indian film industry)."

Later, Akshay and Gaurav took a nostalgic trip down memory lane, discussing the films they worked on together.

Wheel of Fortune airs Monday to Friday at 9 pm on Sony Entertainment Television and streams on Sony LIV.

In another update, Akshay has reunited with filmmaker Priyadarshan after 14 years for the horror comedy Bhooth Bangla. On Thursday, the makers released a teaser showing Mangalpur, a village where no one



marries, fearing the arrival of a mysterious entity called Vadhusur.

Jointly backed by Akshay Kumar, Shobha Kapoor, and Ektaa R Kapoor, Bhooth Bangla is set to release in cinemas on 10th April.

— ETimes

Jenner eyes bigger family

Reality star Kylie Jenner has shared that she would like to welcome more children. The 28-year-old media personality is focusing on herself before turning 30 on August 10, 2027, while considering giving her daughter Stormi, eight, and son Aire, four, another sibling.

Kylie, who has her children with her 34-year-old ex-partner, rapper and singer Travis Scott, told Vanity Fair magazine, "In the last years of my 20s, I want to focus on just me, my businesses, my work, travelling with my kids, enjoying my kids, and then I do want to have more kids."

During his acceptance speech, he thanked his "partner of three years," adding, "Thank you for our foundation. I love you. I couldn't do this without you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart." Kylie mouthed back, "I love you." Khloe Kardashian, who has a daughter and a three-year-old son, noted on her Khloe in Wonderland podcast, "I have thought, maybe, I do have a few more embryos in the freezer. And I was like I don't think I have the energy for another baby, but I do think girls need sisters."

—ETimes